

BEST AVAILABLE COPY

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

~~OF CLAIMS TO BE CLAIMED~~

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-17 (Canceled)

18.(Currently Amended) An ultrasonic surgical instrument comprising:

a housing;

a tubular sheath defining a longitudinal axis and having a proximal end joined to the housing, and a distal end;

an ultrasonic blade extender reciprocally positioned within the tubular sheath and having a blade, the blade having a proximal end and a distal end, and extending distally of the distal end of the tubular sheath; and

a clamp arm pivotally connected directly to the proximal end of the blade.

19.(As Filed) The ultrasonic surgical instrument of claim 18 wherein the blade extender is operatively connected to an operating lever for imparting axial reciprocable displacement between the blade extender and the tubular sheath.

20.(As Filed) The ultrasonic surgical instrument of claim 18, wherein the blade is detachably fastened to the blade extender.

21.(As Filed) The ultrasonic surgical instrument of claim 20, wherein the proximal end of the blade is a screw threaded connection.

22.(As Filed) The ultrasonic surgical instrument of claim 18, wherein the clamp arm is pivotally connected to the blade at a nodal point.

23.(As Filed) The ultrasonic surgical instrument of claim 18, wherein a proximal portion of the clamp arm is positioned within an opening at the distal end of the outer sheath.

24.(Currently Amended) An ultrasonic surgical instrument comprising: a housing;

an operating lever pivotally connected the housing;

a tubular sheath defining a longitudinal axis and having a proximal end operatively connected to the operating lever, and a distal end reciprocally positioned around an ultrasonic blade extender positioned within the tubular sheath, the blade extender having a blade, the blade having a proximal end and a distal end, and extending distally of the distal end of the tubular sheath; and a clamp arm pivotally connected directly to the proximal end of the blade.

25.(As Filed) The ultrasonic surgical instrument of claim 24, wherein the blade is detachably fastened to the blade extender.

26.(As Filed) The ultrasonic surgical instrument of claim 25, wherein the proximal end of the blade is a screw threaded connection.

27.(As Filed) The ultrasonic surgical instrument of claim 24, wherein the clamp arm is pivotally connected to the blade at a nodal point.

28.(As Filed) The ultrasonic surgical instrument of claim 24, wherein a proximal portion of the clamp arm is positioned within an opening at the distal end of the outer sheath.